Amendments to the Abstract:

Please amend the Abstract of the Disclosure section starting at page 36, line 2 and ending at page 36, line 20 to read, as follows.

An ~~The present invention relates to an~~ image forming apparatus includes ~~comprising~~ a plurality of movable image carriers, a movable intermediate transfer body, and a contacting member ~~means~~ separably contacting to the [[said]] intermediate transfer body at a contacting position. A position for transfer between a first image carrier and the intermediate transfer body defines a first transfer position. A position for transfer between a second image carrier and the intermediate transfer body defines a second transfer position. ~~Said image carrier located most closely to said contacting position in a direction extending along said intermediate transfer body on a downstream side in a moving direction of said intermediate transfer body with respect to said contacting position. Said image carrier located most closely to said contacting position in a direction extending along said intermediate transfer body on an upstream side in a moving direction of said intermediate transfer body with respect to said contacting position.~~ A toner image formed on said intermediate transfer body is again transferred onto a transfer material after passing through said first transfer position and said second transfer position. ~~And formula La - Sa ≥ Lm is satisfied where a distance from said contacting position to said first transfer position along the moving direction of said intermediate transfer body is set as La, where a distance from said exposing position on said first image carrier to said first transfer position along the moving direction of said first image carrier is set as Sa, and where an image length formed on said intermediate transfer body is set as Lm.~~ The latent image

formation on the first image carrier is done at a time different from a contacting operation of the contacting member.